



Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District  
43301 Division Street, Suite 206  
Lancaster, CA 93535  
(661) 723-8070

January 17, 2002

For further information contact:|

Violette Roberts, Community Relations & Education Manager  
(760) 245-1661, ext. 6104

### **AIR QUALITY SETTLEMENT FUNDS TO BENEFIT LOCAL STUDENTS**

Lancaster – The Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD) celebrated the launch of its Environmental Scholarship Program by awarding \$15,000 in air quality settlement funds to Antelope Valley College (AVC) and the Snowline Joint Unified School District. The presentation was made during the AVAQMD's redesignation ceremonies, which took place at the Plaza Park Hotel in Lancaster on January 15.

Funds for the new scholarship program originate from fines collected by the AVAQMD through the settlement of air quality violations in the region. During the course of settling enforcement actions with a regulatory air agency, a violator may agree to an alternative form of penalty known as a "Supplemental Environmental Project," as part of the settlement. Pursuant to policies set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California EPA, environmental education scholarships are one type of project which may be funded with penalty monies collected under such an agreement.

During Tuesday's redesignation ceremonies, AVAQMD Air Pollution Control Officer Chuck Fryxell and Operations Manager Bret Banks presented \$10,000 to AVC for the establishment of a scholarship endowment fund which will be used by the college to award grants to students majoring in environmental science or a related field. Staff from Snowline Joint Unified School District - which is located just north of Wrightwood and impacted by air emissions originating in the mountain community - received \$5,000 towards the establishment of a scholarship fund for high school seniors planning to pursue a college degree in environmental science or a related field.

According to Fryxell, the District's establishment of the Environmental Scholarship Program exemplifies the AVAQMD's "ongoing interest in giving back to the community we serve, and our commitment to providing environmental educational opportunities to tomorrow's leaders."

The establishment of the scholarship program was approved by the AVAQMD's Governing Board during its regular meeting on January 15. In the near future, the program will be expanded to assist students attending California State University campuses, and additional educational institutions located within the District's air basin, which includes Antelope Valley communities.